

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-3403

July 25, 2002

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FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY

Michael K. Powell
Chairman
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street Southwest
Washington, DC 20554-0001

Dear Michael:

I write regarding Qwest's application before the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) to reenter the long-distance market in North Dakota.

I understand that the North Dakota Public Service Commission (PSC) has recently approved Qwest's application after a long and extensive review process. Specifically, the PSC has spent two years making sure that Qwest's application was in order. In this process, my state's PSC cooperated with numerous other states to conduct hundreds of tests of Qwest's operating systems and to make sure that Qwest has adequately satisfied the 1996 Telecom Act's 14-point checklist.

Qwest's application now awaits approval before the FCC. The goal of the 1996 Telecommunications Act would be well served by allowing Qwest to reenter the long-distance market in North Dakota. In particular, I am hopeful that a successful application by Qwest would greatly increase phone service competition in my state, with savings passed on to numerous consumers and business customers.

Affordable phone service is vital to North Dakotans. It quite literally is the way we keep in touch with family, friends, and business contacts across our nation and around the world. I am excited at the prospect of increased competition in the North Dakota phone markets and urge the timely consideration of Qwest's application.

Sincerely,



KENT CONRAD
United States Senate

KC:wdm

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